

Lindquist Psychological
554 Washington Ave, Suite 2, Carnegie, PA 15106
(412)-223-7359

This Moment, This Moment

Dr. Thomas Lindquist, Psy.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

It can easily feel overwhelming when we are faced with uncertainty and an unknown future. There are many questions that cannot be answered as we deal with the current crisis around the world and in our communities. We are likely stressed and fearful because of these many unknowns. In the face of so many questions and persistent waves of anxiety, it can be tremendously helpful to practice focusing on the present moment. This can be practiced in a number of ways. Try some of the following approaches to see which might work best for you.

- 1) Focus on the current hour. Rather than focusing on the week ahead, or even the entire day, try focusing on what you can do in the present hour and allow yourself to let thoughts of the future pass. Notice when you feel anxious and ask yourself what you are thinking about. Chances are you have drifted back into a space of uncertainty while thinking about the future or perhaps the past. Kindly bring your attention back to the present hour.
- 2) Similarly, you might try focusing on one current task or activity, and practice directing your attention back to the present activity when your mind wanders forward or into places of uncertainty, such as when we experience ongoing "what if's." Focus your attention on accomplishing this task in this moment and you will experience a greater sense of control.
- 3) Focus on the moment by connecting with your breath. We all have a natural means for centering ourselves by using our breath as a steady and regular point of stillness. This can be perhaps the most challenging when we feel very anxious, but even focusing on your breath for a few moments or practicing slow, deep breathing can make a major difference in calming our nervous system and grounding our attention in the present. Your breath is always ready for you to pay attention to it and ground yourself in the present.
- 4) One-day-at-a-time. This is likely the easiest place to start. Focusing on the present day or taking your life one day at a time has a long history of helping people cope with difficult feelings and urges, such as anxiety or addiction. Taking things one day at a time allows us to focus our attention on a more manageable context, allowing us to feel less overwhelmed by what we cannot predict and cannot control. Try taking it one-day-at-a-time.